

reimbursement policies. Mr. Hassan writes that the "current system has proven to be untenable. . . ." It is the pricing practices of companies like his that have made it untenable.

Pharmacia's behavior overcharges taxpayers—particularly patients—and endangers the public health by influencing the practice of medicine. It is for all of these reasons that I have called on the FDA to conduct a full investigation into such drug company behavior.

The letter from Pharmacia follows:

PHARMACIA CORPORATION,  
Peapack, NJ, October 16, 2000.

Re: Your Letter of October 3, 2000

Hon. FORTNEY PETE STARK,  
Cannon House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE STARK: I am the President, Chief Executive Officer, and a member of the Board of Directors of Pharmacia Corporation ("Pharmacia"). For your information, Pharmacia was created earlier this year upon the merger of Pharmacia & Upjohn, Inc., and Monsanto Company.

In my capacity as Chief Executive Officer of Pharmacia, I write to acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 3, 2000, addressed to Pharmacia & Upjohn, Inc., and to address preliminarily the issues that you raise regarding the reporting and publishing of certain price data for several prescription medications sold by Pharmacia.

Initially, I want to provide you with my personal assurance that Pharmacia takes the issues raised in your letter very seriously. For your information, Pharmacia has actively provided information regarding our pricing practices to a number of investigative bodies. Also, the Company is committed to continuing to work with the appropriate authorities until any differences that may exist in the understanding of this matter are resolved.

As to the particulars of your letter, you should know that Pharmacia is continuing to investigate the allegations made in your letter, as well as those that have been reported recently in various news media regarding the pharmaceutical industry's practices in the area of reimbursement.

As you know, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement policies are considerably complex. Indeed, in correspondence from the administrator of the Health Care Financing Authority ("HCFA"), it was publicly noted in a letter addressed to the Honorable Tom Bliley, Chairman, Commerce Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, that HCFA has been "actively working to address drug payment issues, both legislatively and through administrative actions, for many years." In fact, Ms. DeParle, the HCFA Administrator, notes that her Agency tried several alternative approaches in the early 1990's but that none were adopted. In fact, in 1997, the Administration proposed to pay physicians and suppliers their so-called "acquisition costs" for drugs, but the proposal was not adopted. Instead, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 reduced Medicare payments for covered drugs from 100% to 95% of the average wholesale price or "AWP".

From my perspective, it is the designing of a system to replace the current system that to date has proven to be difficult. Indeed, the current system has proven to be untenable and we would welcome the opportunity of working with you, Congress, HCFA, and any other interested regulatory agencies and stakeholders to develop reimbursement guidelines that are simple, transparent, and representative of the current market conditions.

Finally, I want you to know that—in accordance with your request—I will share

your letter and this response with the members of Pharmacia's Public Issues and Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Directors. In addition, Pharmacia will continue to participate constructively in the public dialogue with regard to whether changes will be made in this arena either legislatively or through administrative action.

Sincerely,

FRED HASSAN.

HONORING MRS. CLEOTILDE  
CASTRO GOULD

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, From a pool of very worthy candidates, the Guam Humanities Council elected to bestow the 2000 Humanities Award for Lifetime Contribution upon Mrs. Cleotilde Castro Gould, a retired educator and well-known local storyteller. This very distinguished award honors the contributions of individuals who, over the years, have worked towards the promotion and advancement of local culture and traditions. To Mrs. Gould, the conferral of this honor is both timely and well deserved.

Mrs. Gould is primarily known as an educator and as a specialist on Chamorro language and culture. In 1974, she played a key role in the formation of the Guam Department of Education's Chamorro language and Culture program. She served as the program's director until her recent retirement. Her many talents include that of singing, songwriting and creative writing. She is a talented singer of Kantan Chamorrita (Chamorro Songs) and has written several songs made popular by local island performer, Johnny Sablan. In the 1980's, she obtained funding to document the Kantan Chamorrita song form. The result was a video record of the ancient call-and-response impromptu song form which is practiced today by few remaining artists.

However, her claim to fame is that of being a storyteller. Her great talent in conveying ancient Chamorro legends to the younger generation has placed great demand on her skills throughout the island's many schools. Mrs. Gould has represented the island as a storyteller in a Pacific islands tour sponsored by the Consortium of Pacific Arts and Cultures and she employed the same talent in 1988 as part of the Guam delegation to the Pacific Festival of Arts in Australia. In addition, Mrs. Gould is also the writer and creator of the Juan Malimanga comic strip. A daily feature in the Pacific Daily News, Guam's daily newspaper, the strip and its characters embody the Chamorro perspective and our local tendency to use humor in order to get points across or to express criticism in a witty and non-confrontational manner. Mrs. Gould is one of my best friends and favorite colleagues in education. She represents the best in that indomitable Chamorro spirit.

Through her song lyrics, the Comical situations she has concocted, and the lessons brought forth by her storytelling, Mrs. Gould has touched a generation of children, young adults and students. Her exceptional ability to communicate with people from a wide range of age and educational backgrounds has en-

abled her to pass on the values and standards of our elders to the younger generation. Her life has been dedicated towards the preservation of our island's culture and traditions. For this she rightfully deserves commendation.

Also worthy of note are several distinguished island residents, who, in their own ways, have made contributions to our island. Dirk Ballendorf, a professor of History and Micronesian Studies, through his scholarly work and research, has provided the academic community a wide body of material on the history and culture of our island and our region. Professor Lawrence Cunningham, the author of the first Chamorro history book, has been largely instrumental in the inclusion of Guam History in the secondary school curriculum and the participation of island students in local and national Mock Trial debate competitions. Professor Marjorie Driver's translation of documents pertaining to the Spanish presence in the Mariana Islands has generated enthusiasm among the local community and brought about a desire to get reacquainted with their heritage and traditions. The Reverend Dr. Thomas H. Hilt, the founder of the Evangelical Christian Academy, has fostered the development of a generation of students and donated his time and efforts providing assistance and counsel to troubled kids. Local banker, Jesus Leon Guerrero, founder of the first locally chartered full service bank on Guam, the Bank of Guam, has made great contributions towards the economic, political, and social transformation of Guam. Newspaperman Joe Murphy has written a daily newspaper column for the last thirty years and has provoked our thoughts and encouraged us to get involved in our island's affairs and concerns. The director of the Guam Chapter of the American Red Cross, Josephine Palomo, in addition to her invaluable assistance during disaster related situations, has established a program which encourages involvement among the island's senior citizens in social and healthful activities. Professor Robert F. Rogers, through his scholarly work and provision of guidance and advice to political science majors in the University of Guam, has fostered the development of policy and leadership within our region. Finally, former Senator Cynthia Torres, one of the first women to be elected to the Guam Legislature, has made great contributions towards the advancement of women and vulnerable members in our island society.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I commend and congratulate these wonderful people for their contributions. Their passion and dedication has gone a long way towards the development of a new generation who, like them, will dedicate their lives and their work towards the humanities. To each and every one of these individuals, I offer my heartfelt gratitude. Si Yu'os Ma'ase'.

CHAIRMAN'S FINAL REPORT CONCERNING THE NOVEMBER 13 SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND FOREST HEALTH HEARING IN ELKO, NEVADA

HON. JIM GIBBONS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 23, 2000

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, last year on November 13th, the Subcommittee on Forests